

2013

Ben Wendel : the manipulation of sound and 'shapes' in the construction of an improvised solo

Luke Christopher Minness
Edith Cowan University

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BEN WENDEL: THE MANIPULATION OF SOUND AND 'SHAPES'
IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN IMPROVISED SOLO

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Bachelor of Music (Honours)

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Edith Cowan University

2013

DECLARATION

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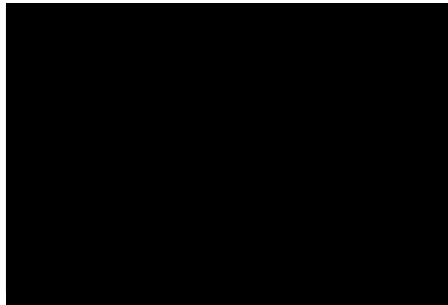
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LUKE MINNESS

2013

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Thank you to my family and friends for their encouragement and care throughout my studies at WAAPA.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to define and analyse several idiosyncratic devices utilised by tenor saxophonist Ben Wendel in order to manipulate elements of sound, rhythm and melody in the construction of an improvised solo. Through transcription and analysis of selected improvisations performed both live and in the recording studio. This paper will also outline and observe Wendel's use of several articulation techniques as well as examining key methods of manipulating melodic and rhythmic cells unique to Wendel's improvisational style. Definitions of each device and their application will be taken from transcription analysis of solos taken over "*What Was*" and "*Jean and Renata*" as performed by Wendel live at the Jazz Gallery (February 17th and 18th, 2012) and "*Blue over Gold*", Linda Oh: Sun Pictures (2013)– as notated by the writer. Each transcription analysis will also discuss the compositional framework in which each solo took place, giving clear insight into the parameters of each improvisation.

Through a great deal of listening, research and analysis; Wendel's personal innovations and manipulation of articulation, melody and rhythm will be presented in sub-categories discussing the use of chromaticism, rhythmic displacement, sequencing, ghost tonguing, interval based line construction, staccato techniques and more. This paper will then define each of these techniques and give examples of application and their effects.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

In its relatively short history, the harmonic evolution of jazz has paralleled the preceding four hundred years of classical music¹. Throughout this rapid progression, modern jazz continues to encourage creation and innovation in varying aspects of sound, harmony, rhythm and composition. This history displays an ever-expanding breadth of musical possibility that endorses diversity of musical language² amongst emerging artists.

This dissertation focuses on defining several idiosyncratic improvisational devices distinctive to saxophonist Ben Wendel's musical language. Wendel's musical language incorporates the manipulation of sound, rhythm and melody in the construction of an improvised solo will t in breaking down the finer elements key to Wendel's unique stlye . Having a strong non-analytical approach to performing and putting emphasis on following aural and musical instincts, Wendel also puts a great deal of intellectual thought into his musical practice³. Wendel describes his thoughts on practice:

*"The significant thing would be that I've just practiced this idea of being able to create shape that I hear and then have the ability to move them in rhythmic and harmonic ways easily as possible. Then just doing this without thinking of any specific kind of linear conceptual approach"*⁴.

Through transcription and analysis of selected improvisations over compositions recorded both in a live and studio format. This paper will outline and observe saxophone articulation (exhibiting parallels between both classical and jazz) alongside key melodic and rhythmic cells (shapes) unique to Wendel's improvisational style. Definitions of each device and their application will be extracted from transcription analysis of "What Was" and "Jean and Renata" as performed by Wendel live at the Jazz Gallery February 17th and 18th, 2012 and "Blue over Gold" composed by Linda Oh, 2013 – as notated by the writer.

¹ Liebman, D, "A chromatic approach to jazz harmony and melody"

² Abbey, N. "Aspects of Rhythm in the music and improvisations in six pieces by bassist Avishai Cohen" (BA.Hon diss, Edith Cowan University, 2011)

³ Interview with author (Aug 2013)

⁴ ibid

1.1 Rationale:

Tenor saxophonist Ben Wendel is an exemplary model of personal identity through artistic expression in modern music. The velvet and whispering nature of Wendel's tone and texture⁵ amidst an employment of fascinating rhythmic and melodic phrases is fast becoming recognized as a strong emerging musical voice. Wendel's deliberate and methodical⁶ approaches to improvisation, in the practice room⁷, aide performances that extend the lineage of Coltrane – Brecker – McCaslin – Turner.⁸

Wendel's musical capability establishes him as one of the music scene's most evocative & progressive young musicians relevant to the research and development of modern music⁹.

It is hoped that the results of this paper will display trends and methods of improvisation that will prove beneficial to others seeking similar ideas and structures for musical expression.

1.2 Methodology:

When h Ben Wendel's music for the first time, the author instantly identified improvisational material that warranted research and posed possible benefits for musicians seeking similar ideas and structures. After establishing contact via e-mail, an interview took place discussing the finer elements of Wendel's music. The interview allowed space for Wendel to agree or disagree with a listener's point of view on both the harmonic and sonic elements of his music.

This lead to Wendel discussing and reviewing his development of sound:

⁵ D'Gama Rose, P "Ben Wendel: FRAME 2012", All About Jazz Review, March 23, 2012

⁶ Robinson, C. "Ben Wendel, *Frame*", Downbeat Magazine, May 2012

⁷ Interview with the author (Aug 2013)

⁸ Chinen, N. "*Ben Wendel — critically omitted from everyone's top 10 lists (CD reviews)*" (March 12, 2009 – New York Times)

⁹ "SunnySide Records," last modified 28 February, 2008, <http://sunnysidezone.com/album/frame>

“I remember when I was younger; initially the thing I was really obsessed with was having a big sound, and then as I’ve gotten older I have sort of become less obsessed with that and more obsessed with the actual tone and timbre of sound”

Wendel also discussed his obsession with the idea of melodic shapes and how to manipulate and move them around with any given piece¹⁰

This paper will examine these stylistic approaches to improvisation, while dividing the information into three sections. Firstly the paper will discuss and investigate relevant devices expressed in Wendel’s improvisations. This investigation will outline several techniques distinctive to Wendel’s playing style and review the musical outcome post application.

Secondly the paper will catalogue common harmonic and rhythmic phrases as well as recurring tone inflections favoured by Wendel in order to obtain a basic understanding on how each device can be manipulated.

Finally transcription analysis of the three selected performances by Wendel will investigate the aforementioned techniques and common phrases for the purpose of understanding and applying them in new improvisations. The transcriptions used will be noted in standard jazz format accompanied by jazz chords or notated harmony where relevant.

Although transcriptions will be available in the appendix, only key passages will be referred to in the content of this analysis in order to feature important information.

A conclusion chapter will outline the techniques and their manipulation from a macro perspective discussing the final product of intellectual practice and instinctual performance, while also considering future development of each device with the influence of Wendel in mind.

This dissertation will give the reader a better understanding of the inner workings of Ben Wendel as an improviser below surface level. While compiling a record of techniques contributing to all the above factors, the paper as a whole will also exhibit an additional method to achieving diversity as a modern improviser and obtaining an original voice.

¹⁰ Interview with author (Aug 2013)

CHAPTER 2: Ben Wendel

2.1 Literature Review:

Available literature based on the improvisational style of Ben Wendel is quite limited, due to his brief influence on modern jazz so far. Not a lot of literature can be found specifically exploring Wendel's improvisation prowess. There is an endless supply of album and performance review, which will be used for quotation and descriptions of Wendel's performance style. Dissertations and Exercise books will act as a source for definition, but primary research material of this paper will be taken from recorded material (both audio and notated) i.e.: live performances, audio interviews, internet interviews and a personal data submitted by Wendel himself. Without the use of these interviews and recorded performances it would have been impossible to understand the intricacies found in the music of Ben Wendel.

i. Journal Articles:

Journal articles featuring Ben Wendel have only begun to emerge over the last 5 or six years. His first album was released in 2002 with the group Kneebody and first release as a leader in 2009. Most of the articles feature album reviews with a small amount of the material being interview-based questions on Wendel's career.

Ben Wendel: Intertwined Coasts: John Murph

(Downbeat Magazine, Aug 2009)

This article discusses Wendel's first album release '*Simple Song*' and the tracks featured. The article not only provides information about each individual track accompanied by Wendel's thoughts, but the article also mentions Wendel as a late bloomer¹¹. Releasing his first album at age 33, Wendel states that he's "*no spring chicken when it comes to the road*", but a late start in L.A was a positive thing.

¹¹ Muph, J. "*Ben Wendel: Intertwined Coasts*" (*Downbeat Magazine, Aug 2009*)

“Here, people are more isolated and it gives you the space to hone your craft without all the intense, crazy pressure of New York. In New York, there are so many brilliant musicians— you can get lost in the mix and lose your sense of identity or a sense of where you’re headed. I feel lucky, because I’m entering my solo career a little older and I have a good network of friends. It won’t be like starting from ground zero.”

Ben Wendel: Frame – Sean J. O’Connell

(NYC Jazz Record, FEB, 2012)

This article reviews Wendel’s latest album release as a leader titled ‘*Frame*’. Both reviews give insight into a listener’s perspective when experiencing Wendel’s music. They supply expressive evaluation of Wendel’s compositional style, also mentioning specific sonic qualities or improvisational qualities that grab the listener’s attention.

ii. Dissertations:

Brecker’s Blues: Transcription and Analysis of six selected improvised blues solos by jazz saxophonist Michael Brecker

David Rawlings Freedy (PhD, The Ohio State University, 2003)

This dissertation contains a multitude of harmonic techniques utilised by Michael Brecker over a blues progression. Having an influence on Wendel¹² and his playing, Brecker had developed certain techniques of improvisation that run parallel with Wendel’s playing style. This paper provides information on the use and application of repeating intervallic patterns presented at varying pitches and displacing harmonic cells. Both of these techniques at some point feature in Wendel’s improvisations.

- Utilizing classical saxophone articulation techniques in jazz performance

Jeremy Trezona (B.A Hon, Edith Cowan University, NOV, 2012)

¹² Interview with author (Aug 2013)

On the topic of classical articulation versus Jazz articulation there is very little information. This dissertation discusses articulation and related techniques that cross between classical and jazz. This paper assisted in defining the finer inflections in relation to sonic embellishment used by Wendel and each techniques origin, while also pointing out key sources of information in the bibliography.

- *The musical cueing of Kneebody*

Lewis Moody (B.A Hon, Edith Cowan University, NOV, 2012)

The musical cueing of Kneebody has no real relevance to the topic at hand. This paper served as a key source of biographical information, describing Wendel's development through high study at Eastman College and how he met the other members of Kneebody.

iii. Blog Entries:

- Saxophonist Ben Wendel: Touring with Snoop Dogg was a circus

Lily Troia (blog.citypages.com)

In this article Troia provides a transcribed interview discusses all things music with Ben Wendel for CityBlogs.com also promoting Wendel's gigs at studio Z and Turf Club. The interview follows a recent release of *Small Constructions* a duo album with French pianist Dan Tepfer and talks about Wendels early musical influences, Kneebody and touring experiences with Snoop Dogg and the artist formerly known as Prince. The interview gives the reader a great insight into Wendels early experiences with music, described by Wendel as "*very weird, disparate*".

iv. Recorded Interviews:

- The Jazz Session With Jason Crane #346

thejazzsession.com (FEB, 2012)

This 50-minute discussion about the new release “*Frame*” on Sunnyside Records, Wendel discusses composing the music for the album, “*his proclivity for long musical lines*”¹³ and other projects he has been involved in recently. Towards the end of the interview Wendel describes his experience with Jazz Legend Billy Higgins (who has recorded with the likes of John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt and many many more) Wendel discusses his luck to be one of the last to experience the “*apprentice*” education of jazz, rather than the institution centered learning style students experience today¹⁴.

Data Collection

Ben Wendel (Aug 2013)

In a 29-minute audio clip recorded on a flight to Germany in the early hours of the morning while on tour with Kneebody, Wendel answers a set of questions sent to him by the author via e-mail. In the audio clip Wendel talks about his own idea of sound production, composition, improvisation and development of his own techniques. One of the most valuable parts of the audio interview is when Wendel describes his process when he is practicing. In this description he talks about intellectually investigating all forms of liner approach in the practice room, and how letting go of that in a performance allows you to follow ideas with purpose and strength.

“If you stick to the idea in a really strong and clear way, you can harmonically depart from the changes, but as listening experiences you’ll still accept the narrative of what the soloist is doing if the design and structure of the information is really clear and has a lot of intelligence to it”.

¹³ “The Jazz session With Jason Crane #346” Online Interview, www.thejazzsession.com

¹⁴ *ibid*

v. Books:

Tracy Lee Heavner “Saxophone Secrets: 60 Performance Strategies for the Advanced Saxophonist,”(2013) 111

This book provides key information on the preparation and execution of advanced techniques for saxophonists. The advanced techniques described in this exercise book that are displayed in Wendel’s improvisations are classical and jazz vibrato, Split Tones and Ghost Tonguing (Half-Tonguing). The book breaks down each exercise and gives step-by-step explanation on how to perform each technique, describing final sound product.

Hello! Mr. Sax, ou Parametres du Saxophone (Hello! Mr. Sax, or Parameters of the Saxophone) (English and French Edition)

Jean Marie – Londeix (January 1981)

This exercise book is an excellent resource for understanding and implementing advanced techniques in areas of articulation and sound production. This book provides information on the art of articulation and this dissertation focuses on the chapters that examine the possibilities and parameters when executing staccato, circular breathing and sound attack techniques.

2.2 Biographical information:

Ben Wendel (February 20 1976) was born in Vancouver, Canada and grew up in a musical family based in Santa Monica, California. Wendel listened to classical music (introduced to him by his opera-singing mother) whilst listening to tapes of Charlie Parker and John Coltrane donated by a crazy 'jazz-ophile' neighbor. Wendel also submerged himself in the sounds of KDAY's twenty-four hours of commercially uninterrupted hip-hop AM radio station. The diversity of Wendels listening fashioned a very weird, disparate set of musical influences growing up¹⁵. Wendel attended Santa Monica high school, which was known for its strong musical departments,¹⁶ and he played in the wind ensemble, the jazz ensemble and the school orchestra (on Basoon). After graduating in 1994 Wendel attended Eastman School of music where he met Adam Benjamin, Shane Endsley and Kaveh Rastegar¹⁷. In 1998 Wendel took a year off from Eastman school of music and went back to L.A where he joined "The World stage All-Stars" put together by Billy Higgins.

"I remember taking a year off from Eastman College in 98' and for that year I got to hang out and play with Billy Higgins for that whole year. And I have to say, that was the most important and influence experience of my life as a musician"¹⁸

After graduating from The Eastman School of Music in 99' Wendel and Rastegar relocated to Los Angeles and met up with Adam Benjamin who had transferred to Calarts (California Institute of the Arts) during his study at Eastman. Adam Benjamin talks about how Kneebody formed:

"We [Endsley, Wendel and Benjamin] were in school together, we all started in the same year, and we all lived in the dorms together...Then I met Nate [Wood] when I switched to CalArts...I met Kaveh [Rastegar] right after that, he started at Eastman right after I left, and he was friends with Shane...I introduced everyone, I'm proud to say – I organised the first session where they all met Nate [Wood]. We had a weekly

¹⁵ Troia, L. "Saxophonist Ben Wendel: Touring with Snoop Dogg was a circus", Interview, City Pages BLOG, April 2013
http://blogs.citypages.com/gimmenoise/2013/04/saxophonist_ben_wendel_interview.php

¹⁶ Orenstein, D. "Ben Wendel – Saxman, Composer, Freak of Nature" Online interview www.thebestsaxophonewebsiteever.com

¹⁷ "Kneebody Website" <http://kneebody.com/about/>

¹⁸ "The Jazz session With Jason Crane #346" Online Interview, www.thejazzsession.com

gig at a coffee shop at UCLA, before we were a band or anything, it was just a weekly thing we had. And it was really bad for a long time.”¹⁹

While Endsley was away on tour the group formed a quartet under the name of ‘Wendel’ playing a regular gig at the Temple Bar. The band released their first album *Wendel* in Jan 2002.²⁰ In 2005 the quintet recorded their first self-titled album under trumpeter, educator and Jazz luminary Dave Douglas’ recently established record label *Greenleaf*²¹. Shortly after Kneebody’s first release the group quickly gained a reputation as a band on the cutting edge of post-modern contemporary jazz²², opening doors to greater things. While experiencing great success with Kneebody including 9 CD releases between 2005-2013 and a Grammy nomination in 2009 for ‘*12 Songs By Charles Ives, a collaboration with Theo Bleckmann*’; Wendel’s accomplishments as a composer include receiving numerous grants with Chamber Music America, an ASCAP jazz composer award, the Victor Lynch-Staunton award by the Canadian Council for the Arts and was the winner of the International Song writing competition in 2007. Wendel is also a recording artist for Sunnyside records, releasing two solo albums “*Simple Song*” and “*Frame*” while also appearing as a sideman on several recordings including albums by Deadelus, Dakah Hip-Hop Orchestra, and Good Charlotte, Todd Sickafoose, Tigran Hamasyan. Finally Wendel also had the opportunity record and perform live on the Jay Leno show with the artist formerly known as Prince and tour with hip-hop artist Snoop-Dogg, now known as “Snoop-Lion”²³.

¹⁹ Matt Rubin and Vikram Devasthali, “Every Alphabet Has It’s Consequences: In Conversation with Adam Benjamin (Part II)” *Twenty Dollars: Purveyors of the pointless (blog)*, February 22, 2010, <http://twentydollars.wordpress.com/>

²⁰ *ibid*

²¹ - *The musical cueing of Kneebody* – Lewis Moody (B.A Hon, Edith Cowan University, NOV, 2012)

²² Aaron Cohen, “Kneebody: Creating a new language” *Downbeat*, (August 2005): 32

²³ “Wendel, Ben Blog,”. <http://www.benwendel.com/>

CHAPTER 3: Common Techniques

Chapter 3 focuses on outlining improvisational techniques utilised by Ben Wendel when manipulating various melodic and rhythmic cells. The focal points for most of Wendel's improvisations are the maneuvering of shape/cell-motivated ideas; an idea influenced by a friend back in college. This friend is incredible piano player called Matt Mitchel who is now becoming well known in the U.S,²⁴ playing with the Claudio Quintet, Dave Douglas and Tim Berne. Wendel asked Mitchell "how do you approach changes"²⁵.

"Well you know, I basically go inside and outside of the key as I see fit and I just play shapes that are really strong and have a clear design to them and I just know how the forms work and that's just how I do it, I'm not really thinking about any kinda of specific math or anything like that"²⁶.

From his discussion with Mitchell, Wendel took away the idea of having the ability to create melodic narratives. Within an improvisation having to stick to each idea whilst trying to move them around from bar-to-bar²⁷. Chapter three will be based on identifying some of Wendels distinctive melodic shapes that are audible in his improvisations.

3.1 Articulation:

Articulation is the "*separation of successive notes from one another, singly or in groups, by a performer*"²⁸. The focus of articulation refers primarily to the degree in which a performer detaches successive notes; this can be done in a variety of different ways. Ben Wendel has always had technique admired by other saxophonists, especially his attention to articulation aspects of sound²⁹.

"I started off as a classical saxophonist and bassoonist as you may or may not

²⁴ Interview with author (Aug 2013)

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ *ibid*

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ The New Grove Dictionary of Music. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/>.

²⁹ Interview with author (Aug 2013)

know, and that kind of aesthetic and approach of every note having clear and full articulation has just kind of stuck with me”

The articulation techniques distinctive to Wendel’s improvisation style that will be discussed are Ghost Tonguing (Half-Tonguing) and the use of Staccato.

- Ghost Tonguing (Tongue Muting)

Ghost tonguing (Tongue Muting/Half-Tonguing) is a style of articulation used predominantly in jazz to improve attack on specific notes stimulating swing feel³⁰. Instead of manipulating the air stream to endorse intensity in the swing feel, this technique focuses on muting the reed with the tongue to create tension in the air stream with a release at keys points in phrases for a more intensified swing feel. This also brings attention to significant notes enhancing the melodic line³¹. The origin of this technique is unknown but early use can be traced back to Lester Young who favoured the technique as a pedal point to create tension in the music. In Fig.1 Lester Young uses this technique in the bridge of ‘*I Got Rhythm*’ sustaining a singular note, emphasizing rhythm and ghost tonguing for musical tension. Lester plays a concert Eb acting as the b9 in measures 1 and 2, #5 in measures 3 and 4, #9 in measures 5 and 6, finally resolving to the b7 in measure 7.

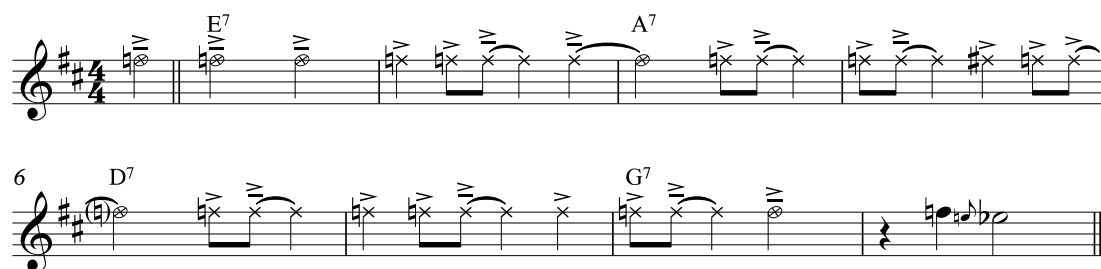


Fig 1. Excerpt of Lester Young’s Solo (1:50) on ‘*I Got Rhythm*’, recorded live at the Philharmonic, 1949.

Wendel also favours this technique often and uses it a very similar fashion in developing a common motifs. An example of this is featured in Fig 2 With Wendel Using a different rhythmic cell to Young.

³⁰ Tracy Lee Heavner “Saxophone Secrets: 60 Performance Strategies for the Advanced Saxophonist,”(2013) 111

³¹ *ibid*



Fig 2. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's Solo (8:02) on "Jean and Renata", Recorded Live at the Jazz Gallery 2013

- Staccato:

This is a technique that instructs the performer to separate a note from its neighbours by silence or articulation³². The separation may be, but not necessarily accompanied by some form of attack, and occasionally the term may "imply emphasis without physical separation"³³. This technique is predominantly a classical technique, which is mentioned as early as the mid 1700's by Bach in his *Versuch* (1753) as the technique that implies playing with 'fire and a slight accentuation'³⁴. A modern improviser pre-dating Wendel's emergence on the jazz scene that utilizes this technique is Michael Brecker.



Fig 3. Excerpt from Michael Brecker's solo (2:54) on 'Invitation' - from 'Merge' by Jack Wilkins (1977)

Being a main influence on Wendel and his playing³⁵, this passage of Brecker's improvised solo exhibits similar direction to Wendel on the manipulation of staccato notes. The attention of each staccato note articulated before an interval leap is also parallel to each note in the completion of a phrase. An example of this of this is given in Fig. 4



Fig 4. Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (2:39) on "What Was" - Original composition performed Live at the Jazz Gallery (2012).

³² The New Grove Dictionary of Music. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/>. (accessed July 13)

³³ *ibid*

³⁴ *ibid*

³⁵ Interview with the author (Aug 2013)

3.2 Shapes/Cells:

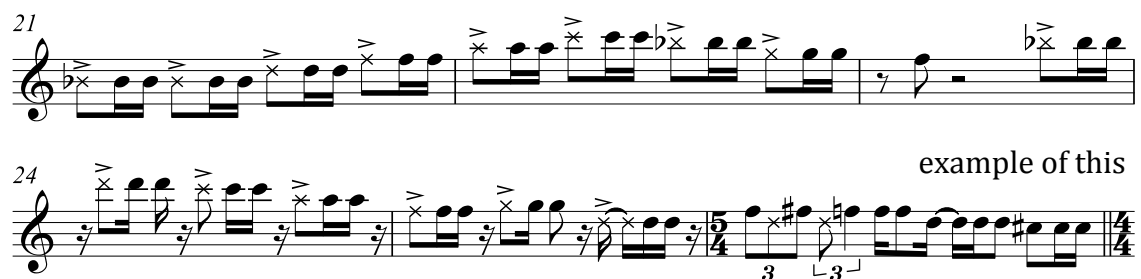
A musical Shape/Cell refers to a “*small rhythmic and melodic design that can be isolated, or can make up one part of a thematic context*”³⁶. In the context of this paper the research will be restricted to analyzing Wendel’s use of melodic and rhythmic shapes/cells in improvisation. Melodic and Rhythmic shapes/cells can be developed independently from its framework as a fragment and can also be utilized as a specific motif.

3.2a Rhythmic shapes/cells:

The key attribute to recognising a rhythmic cell is identifying whether there is melodic connotation. The cell may be entirely percussive, but should not be influenced by melodic or harmonic material. Wendel uses at least two approaches to the manipulation of rhythmic cells during his improvised solos.

- Displacement:

The displacement of a rhythmic Cell is “the act of *rhythmically shifting a line*”³⁷ or cell. Wendel utilizes this technique regularly to create tension rhythmically; an



displacement is given in Fig.4, where Wendel shifts the rhythmic cell by a 16th note to stretch the phrase across the 5/4 bar.

Fig 5. Excerpt of Ben Wendel’s Solo (8:02) on “*Jean and Renata*”, Recorded Live at the Jazz Gallery 2013

³⁶ Nattiez, Jean-Jaques (1990). *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music* (*Musicologie générale et sémiologie*, 1987). Translated by Carolyn Abbate (1990).

³⁷ Noah Baerman, *The Big Book of Improvisation: Tools and inspiration for soloing* (2003)

- Hemiola:

This rhythmic device consists of superimposing 2 notes in the time of 3 or 3 notes in the time of 2. For example in Fig.4 this displays 2 notes in the time it takes to play 3 implying a different time signature, making this a 3 over 4 hemiola.

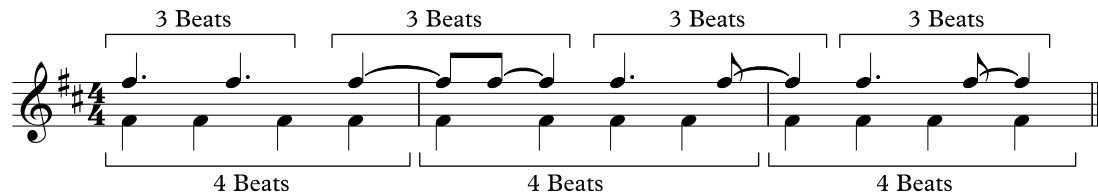


Fig 6. Example of Hemiola

Wendel features this technique manipulating a common rhythm that regularly appears in his improvisations over “What Was”. Wendel initiates the three beat cell on the second beat of measure one and stretches the hemiola to measure 4 of figure 6.

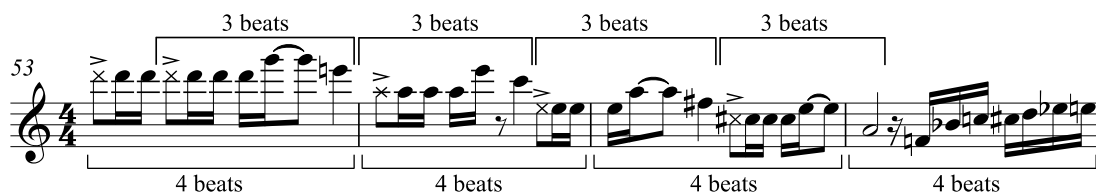


Fig 7. Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (6:49) on “What Was” – Original composition performed *Live at the Jazz Gallery* (2012).

3.2b Melodic shapes/cells:

Wendel keeps an exercise book filled with phrases and melodic shapes that he is constantly collecting from his own practice, listening to peers, live gigs and recordings³⁸. He then cycles these melodic shapes through different keys all over the saxophone in different ways he see's fit³⁹. It's this practice method that allows Wendel to manipulate melodic shapes/cells naturally. He uses chromaticism as a vehicle to weave between intervallic-based lines, passing through chord tones and targeting melodic points.

³⁸ Interview with author (Aug 2013)

³⁹ *ibid*

- Sequencing melodic shapes:

Another technique used by Wendel is the repetition and modulation of melodic shapes. The melodic or polyphonic shapes can consist of a short figure or motif stated at different pitches and may either be true to the diatonicism of the passage or involve literal transposition⁴⁰. The recurrence of a melodic passage may not necessarily have to repeat on the same part of the beat, but must in some way resemble the previous statement⁴¹. The motif does not have to sequence chromatically or contain chromaticism to be labeled as sequencing.

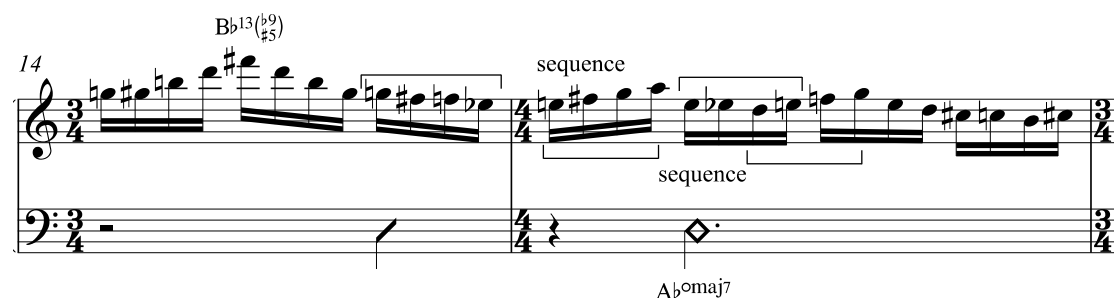


Fig.8 Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (3:01) on "blue over gold" – Linda Oh, Sun Pictures (2013)

Fig. 8 uses 4 note cells consecutively sequenced to create tension over the diminished harmony. The melodic line weaves with a smooth contour outlining four note scalar qualities reminiscent of G major.

3.4 Chromaticism:

Aural and instinctual musicianship is the main emphasis of Wendel's improvisation and having the ability to play what he hears on the horn versus what he knows on the horn is essential to melodically outlining the direction of the improvised line⁴². Liebman describes the goal of melodic improvisation, (especially chromatic playing) as having the ability to "*hear intervallically, no matter what the harmonic source is*"⁴³. This could include the manipulation of intervals or chord tones, which is one technique referred to by Jerry Bergonzi as

⁴⁰ "The Oxford Dictionary of Music" (www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed Aug 15)

⁴¹ Keller, B, "How to improvise jazz melody" Harvey Mudd College, Sep, 2012

⁴² Interview with author (Aug 2013)

⁴³ Liebman, D. "A Chromatic approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody". (Jan 2006)

the addition of chromatic passing tones between tones⁴⁴. This technique enhances a reduced melody with chromatic shapes/cells. Although Bergonzi refers to these chromatic shapes as bebop scales, this dissertation will stick with Wendel's focus on Shapes/Cells, which essentially is that same process using a different label.

- Chromatic Targeting

Chromatic targeting uses chromaticism (a style of composition improvised or written, that uses chromatic harmony⁴⁵) to target melodic notes within an melodic phrase.



Fig 9. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's Solo (6:10) on "*Jean and Renata*", Recorded Live at the Jazz Gallery 2013

In Fig. 9 Wendel uses this technique in its basic form constructing a line that moves in descending fashion targeting the maj7 of the D major chord. He then clearly outlines the melodic lines motive by playing the D major arpeggio, which is relevant to the harmonic source.

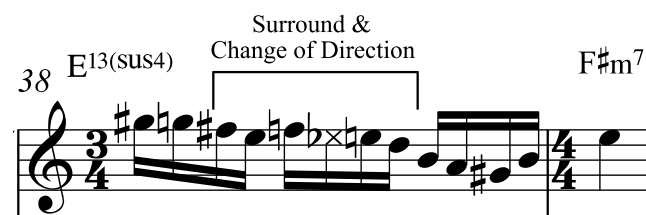


Fig.10. Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (3:36) on "*blue over gold*" – Linda Oh, Sun Pictures (2013)

Fig 10. Is an example of chromatic passing notes between chord tones. In measure one the melodic line chromatically passing through the maj3rd, maj9, b9, tonic and b7, which is all common dominant chord tone harmony. Bergonzi describes the surround of the b9 as *Changing Direction*⁴⁶, but instead of

⁴⁴ Bergonzi, J. "*volume 3 – the jazz line*", (1996)

⁴⁵ "The Oxford Dictionary of Music" (www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed Aug 15)

⁴⁶ "The Oxford Dictionary of Music" (www.oxfordmusiconline.com) (accessed Aug 15)

continuing in an ascending manner Wendel uses the surround technique a second time to continue in a descending fashion giving a weaving effect to the melodic line.

- Interval based chromaticism:

Although this technique may appear to be an oxymoron, it actually refers to the maneuvering of intervallic based cells in a chromatic motion.



Fig.11. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's Solo (7:39) on "*Jean and Renata*", Live at the Jazz Gallery 2013

Fig 11 is an example of another chromatic targeting technique described by Liebman as interval based line construction⁴⁷. In this excerpt taken from Wendel's improvisation over Linda Oh's *Blue over Gold*, Wendel constructs a melodic shape using minor thirds as the primary target. The melodic line weaves between minor 3rd intervals using chromatic passing tones, displacing the interval in order to avoid sounding like a pre-determined pattern.

⁴⁷ Liebman, D. "A Chromatic approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody". (Jan 2006)

CHAPTER 4: Transcription and Analysis

In this chapter Transcription analysis will take a look the structure of each solo section from a compositional perspective and dissect key passages that employ multiple techniques distinctive to Wendels improvisational style in the areas of sound and shape manipulation.

4.1 *What Was*:

"What Was", is a composition based on a sketch written by Wendel that eventually became a jazz suite for the Chamber Music of America "New Works Grant" which he received in 2008 and 2011⁴⁸. This piece is an exemplary feature of Wendel's ability to command rhythm.

4.1a Improvisational Framework:

Gravitating towards ideas that create and develop personal musical language, Wendel capitalizes on the ability to slowly create harmonic ideas through composition⁴⁹.

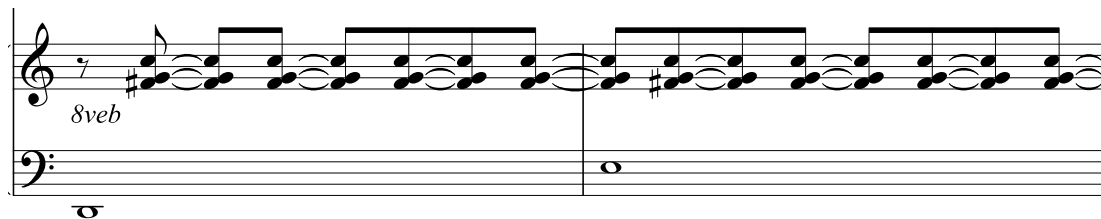


Fig 12. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's composition "*What Was*"

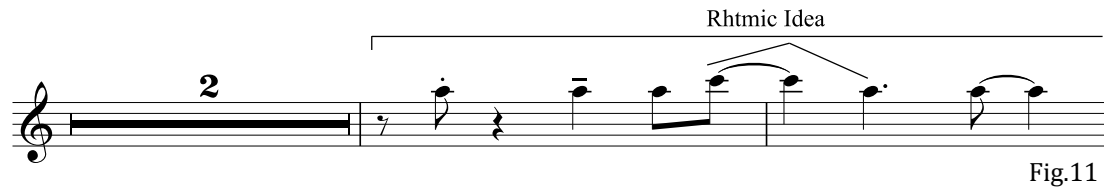
"*What Was*" is an incredibly complex piece focused on developing melody through cellular composition using variations on inverted triads and dyads in conjunction with a rhythmically simple bass movement. The 46-measure structure of "*What Was*" dynamically builds throughout the melody to its peak at measure 36, doubling as a focal resolution point for soloists.

⁴⁸ "CD Review: ACT" Bjurecords, <http://www.bjurecords.com/ACT.html>

⁴⁹ Interview with author (Aug 2013)

4.1b Significant Passages:

- Rhythmic cells – Staccato - Portamento



The most immediately noticeable feature to Wendel's solo is the established rhythmic motif incorporating techniques of sound within the first four measures. Wendel presents this theme by shifting each rhythmic cell on and off the beat, which coincides with the underlining harmonic pattern. Accentuating key tones in each phrase with the use of staccato and portamento⁵⁰ inflections giving colour to each cell.



As the solo continues to develop throughout the first time over the structure Wendel continues to play variations on the rhythmic cell. In figure 14 Wendel resolves the rhythmic idea by repeating a summarized rhythmic theme with use of articulation for emphasis.

⁵⁰ Portamento – meaning the connection of two notes by passing audibly through the intervening pitches

- Rhythmic Displacement – Chord Anticipation

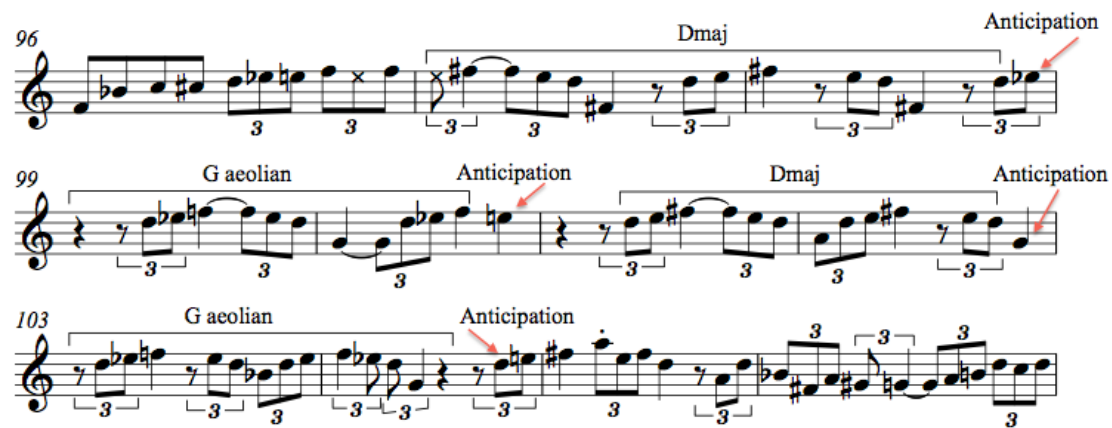


Fig .15 Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (4:15) on "What Was", Live at the Jazz Gallery (2013)

In this passage Wendel uses rhythmic displacement while anticipating the change of the underlining harmony. He shifts between outlining G aeolian and D major whilst playing off the triplet pulse. The two Melodic cells use target the $b7$ of the G Aeolian and the Maj 3^{rd} of the D Major. These cells are only a semi tone away, giving a prime example of the voice leading outlined in the Harmonic structure of the piece.

- Chromatic Passing Notes:

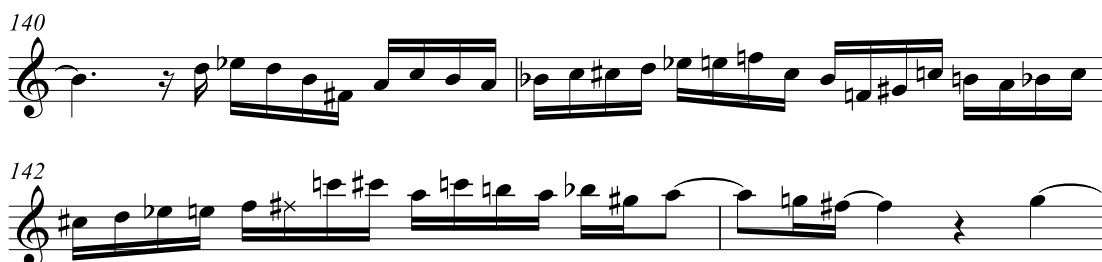


Fig. 16 Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (5:20) on "What Was", Live at the Jazz Gallery (2013)

Figure 16 demonstrates Wendels ability to navigate his way through a parent key. In this passage he first outlines Amin in the first measure modulating with the harmony to outline Bbmin11 chromatically surrounding chord tones to give a less consonant result. In Measure three Wendel continues with the contour of his melodic line modulating back to chromatically outlining Amaj.

4.1c Summary:

From start to finish Wendel's solo over "What Was" exploited rhythmic development and intensity. As the narrative progressed so did the intensity and complexity of rhythmic manipulation. The structure of this original composition drove Wendel to syncopate rhythms and continually subdivide each beat until a rapid fire of notes reached the solo sections climax. The significant passages and cell motif's extrapolated from this transcription displayed a number of techniques and variations on manipulation. These were:

- Rhythmic cell development
 - Chromatic passing notes
 - Staccato inflection
 - Chord anticipation
- outlining a key centre

4.2 *Blue over Gold*:

Recorded live in the studio as a part of Linda Oh's project Sun Pictures. The project was initially put together to observe the possibilities of creating music with Ted Poor (Drums), James Muller (Guitar), Linda Oh (Double Bass) and Ben Wendel (Saxophone), while painting a portrait of a place back home in Western Australia⁵¹. *Blue over Gold* creates a bed of harmonic rhythms that fall on odd places in the bar line, that (the majority of the time) resemble 7/4.

4.2a Improvisational Framework:

43

F#13(sus4)
Solos
Optional line

G#m7 B/A#

47

F#13(sus4) G#m7 B/A#

Fig 17. Excerpt from *Blue over Gold* lead-sheet, written by Linda Oh⁵²

Fig. 17 is the improvisational framework (solo section) composed by Linda Oh for *Blue over Gold*. The skeleton of the solo section *Blue over Gold* is written in multi-meter switching between three measures of 4/4 and one measure of 2/4 every four bars. Although the number of beats and underlining harmonic rhythms imply a time signature of 7/4, the layout of the lead-sheet influences the players on the record to play phrases that imply a time signature of 4/4, and as a result keeping clear of traditional 7/4 claves.

⁵¹ "Online interview" Linda Oh "Sun Pictures" www.youtube.com [2013, Greenleaf Music]

4.2b Significant Passages:

- Tonal Anchoring – ghost tonguing – rhythmic displacement

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system (measures 1-4) features a treble staff with a melodic line starting on E4, marked with 'x' symbols above the first four notes, and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the melodic line with triplets and rests, and includes chord markings E13(sus4), F#m7, and A/G# above the staff. The third system (measures 9-12) shows a change in the bass line and continues the melodic development. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, rests, and dynamic markings like 'Allege?'. The overall structure is a 12-measure excerpt.

Fig.18 Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (2:43) on "blue over gold" – Linda Oh, Sun Pictures (2013)

This passage taken from the initial statement of Wendel's solo utilises a number of techniques in its natural construction. The focal point of the melodic passage implies emphasis of the 5th on the E13sus4 chord (harmonic source). This focal technique could be labeled as *Tonal Anchorage*, which is linear tonality resulting from the emphasis of one pitch or pitch cluster⁵³. In general, the concept is about shape and overall color instead of functionality⁵⁴. The anchor in this phrase is also highlighted by the use of ghost tonguing on the strong beats at the beginning of each 4 bar measure. Finally the use of repetition and displacement of rhythmic cells is used in measures two, three, five and six.

⁵³ Liebman, D. "A Chromatic approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody". (Jan 2006)

⁵⁴ *ibid*

- Chromatic Targeting – Melodic Sequencing

Fig. 19 Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (3:23) on "blue over gold" – Linda Oh, Sun Pictures (2013)

Fig. 19 The use of chromaticism targeting the 11th of the Bb13(b9#5) measure two stretches across 5 beats. This stretch incorporates the diatonic use of the Cmaj scale into a chromatic lean towards the target on the second beat. After the chromatic line reaches its target Wendel arpeggiates the extended chord tones of the Bb13(b9#5) playing chord tones on the 11th, #5th and b9th. In measure four he repeats the shape, modulating the cell a semi-tone below its initial positioning (also note similar use of altissimo Breckers – Wendel likes glass like purity)

- Intervallic based Cell Sequencing – Chromatic Targeting

Fig. 20 Excerpt from Ben Wendel's solo (3:31) on "blue over gold" – Linda Oh, Sun Pictures (2013)

In fig. 20 Chromaticism isn't used in conjunction with sequencing as previously mentioned in figure. 18. It's actually used in the modulation of each melodic cell. Each melodic cell in fig. 20 is made up of a combination of surrounding (surr) chord tones and chromatic targeting. The objective of the melodic passage in this figure is to target the b5 chord tones of the F#min and A/G# harmony. Continuing in similar fashion developing the intervallic line. Wendel finally

resolves on beat 1 in the 4th measure clearly outlining the E13(sus4) in its basic form (5th, b7, tonic, maj 3rd)

- Narrative Soloing - Melodic Cell Development – Use of Dynamics

In this section the analysis focuses on larger melodic cells and their lyrical role in creating drama within improvisation.

“All music is drama, and on the ability of the improviser to handle dramatic devices rests a considerable portion of his success as a jazz player”⁵⁵.

Often Wendel refers to his improvisations as a narrative that he’s constantly following⁵⁶. Figure 21 analyses a passage of Wendel’s solo that displays this concept with a sense of lyricism and melodic development. Three cells have been outlined from a macro perspective examining dynamics, contour and relevant techniques breeding tension and drama.

The figure shows a musical score for a jazz solo. It is divided into three systems, each with a treble and bass staff.
 System 1 (measures 46-48): Labeled 'Melodic Cell #1'. Measure 46 has a Bb13(b9) chord. Measure 47 has an Abmaj7 chord. Measure 48 has a triplet of eighth notes.
 System 2 (measures 49-52): Labeled 'Melodic Cell #2'. Measure 49 has an E13(sus4) chord. Measure 50 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 51 has F#m7 and A/G# chords. Measure 52 has a triplet of eighth notes.
 System 3 (measures 53-56): Labeled 'Melodic Cell #3'. Measure 53 has an E13(sus4) chord. Measure 54 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 55 has F#m7 and A/G# chords. Measure 56 has an 8va marking and a triplet of eighth notes.

Fig. 21 Excerpt from Ben Wendel’s solo (3:48) on “Blue Over Gold” – Linda Oh, Sun Pictures (2013)

⁵⁵ Baker, David “David Baker’s Jazz Improvisation: A Comprehensive Method for All Musicians”, (Alfred music, 1988) 12

⁵⁶ Audio interview with author (Aug2013)

Melodic Cell #1 acts as an initial statement with a calm dynamic and descending contour, ending with a powerful low A (concert pitch). The tonal construction of this melodic line involves chromatically targeting the low A with directional changes throughout the line to disguise its resolution.

Melodic cell #2 dynamically bursts two octaves above the previous statement launching into a rhythmically complex response. Using concert A as a pivotal point, Wendel plays off the triplet pulse whilst exploiting ghost tonguing to give a more dynamic attack on each peak of the phrase, finally releasing with a two octave drop down to another low A (concert).

Melodic cell #3 acts as a rhythmic release from the two previous statements, while outlining the pulse with a simple 8th note phrase outlining an E major triad. The dynamic contour ascends from a moderate volume level allowing drummer Ted Poor to crescendo while creating rhythmic tension towards the release point on beat three in the final measure.

These three melodic cells all differentiate in aspects of rhythm, dynamic and resolution point, almost as if each cell is a developing verse in Wendel's narrative.

4.2c Summary:

Wendel's solo on *Blue over gold* is an excellent example of his ability to control melodic cells while employing techniques that manipulate the construction of each phrase.

These are the improvisational techniques utilized in this transcription when approaching the manipulation of sound and 'shapes'.

- Cell development
- Interval based sequencing
- Melodic sequencing
- Chromatic targeting
- Tonal anchoring
- Ghost tonguing
- Rhythmic displacement

4.3 Jean and Renata:

A concept that presents itself at the forefront of Wendel's writing style is a passion for "*composing simple melodies with complex voice leading and harmony underneath*"⁵⁷. *Jean and Renata*, a "*snapshot of a French pair of patrons of the arts*"⁵⁸, is a prime example of this writing style.



Fig 22. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's composition "*Jean and Renata*"

The compositional framework of 'Jean and Renata' is similar to 'What Was', where Wendel continues to form strong connections between the bass line and harmony. The rhythmic structure relies on the bass and treble phrases to lock simultaneously to create the groove. The harmonic structure is based on the same idea, employing a shifting bass line with simple dyadic chord structure executed by the guitar. Molding two very simple ideas together to create a composition with strong direction.

4.3b Significant passages

- Rhythmic displacement:

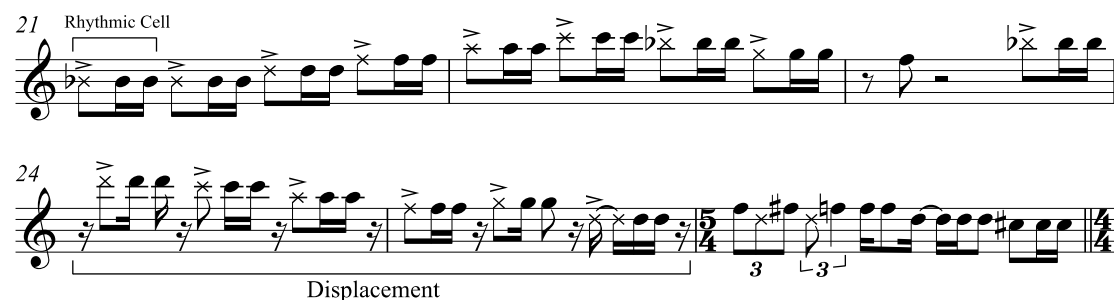


Fig.23. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's Solo (5:50) on "*Jean and Renata*", Live at the Jazz Gallery 2013

⁵⁷ <http://sunnysidezone.com/album/frame>

⁵⁸ *ibid*

The approach and execution of this passage in theory is quite straight forward, but from a listening point of view this figure is extremely complex. Wendel determines a rhythmic cell to manipulate and during the course of displacing the rhythmic cell in measure four, drummer Nate Wood starts to play of multiple syncopation based feels leaving the rhythmic line on a bed of sound without time related assistance. Wendel keeps exceptional time when maintaining the direction of his motif.

- Mixing of melodic cell/shapes Chromatically



Fig.24. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's Solo (7:06) on "*Jean and Renata*", Live a the Jazz Gallery 2013

The chromatic mixture of melodic shapes exhibited in figure 23 displays the possibility of constructing a phrase using a combination of shapes. In this figure Wendel swaps between two melodic shapes/cells in an ascending contour creating harmonic tension through chromatic shifting of shapes number 1 and number 2. The strength and direction of this idea from a larger perspective reveals a mirrored effect looking something like this:

M1-M2-M1-M1-M1-M2-M1.

- Increase of rhythmic complexity - slur/slide/portamento

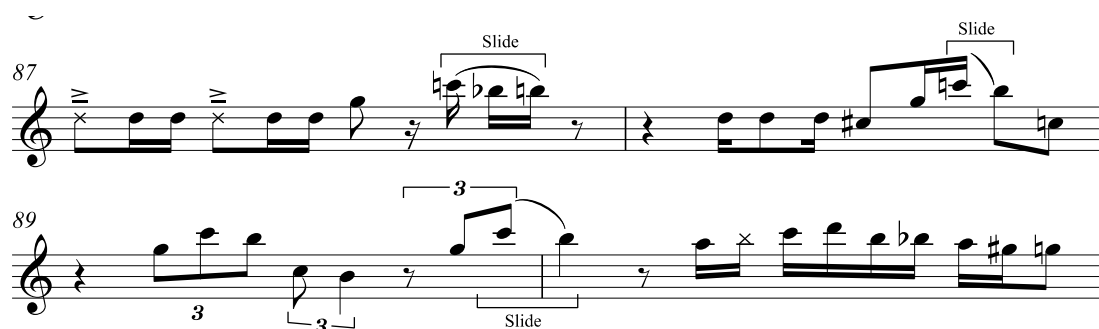


Fig.25. Excerpt of Ben Wendel's Solo (7:51) on "*Jean and Renata*", Live a the Jazz Gallery 2013

In this excerpt Wendel combines the use of articulation and displacement of a melodic shape to create rhythmic interest. Beginning with a favoured ghost-

tonguing cell, Wendel target concert C and B while intentionally tuning each peak loosely. The effect audibly transitions between two notes through the intervening pitches; this description strikes some resemblance to the technique of portamento. The development of rhythmic complexity over the three-measure phrase shifts by one beat, to then repeat the phrase off the triplet pulse.

4.3c Summary:

Ben Wendel's improvisation over *Jean and Renata* is a collection of melodic phrases that weave in and out of tonal harmony whilst rhythmically creating tension over the simple groove.

Techniques that were outlined:

- Mixing of melodic cell/shapes
- Increase of rhythmic complexity
- Rhythmic displacement

CONCLUSION:

The evolution of jazz throughout its relatively short history presents a seemingly limitless boundary for improvisational possibility. Ben Wendel's long list of varying musical influences stimulates a unique approach to improvisation, which contributes to the continual development of the genre as a whole. Motivated by a passion for melody, Wendel has developed the ability to aurally construct improvisations that cohesively transform tonality into narrative.

It has been determined that intellectual practice incorporating articulation and manipulation of melodic and rhythmic cells establishes an advanced step toward obtaining freedom within improvisation limitations. Wendel's application of melodic and rhythmic cell manipulation is documented by transcription analysis over three recorded performances in chapter 4. These improvisations present a number of key passages demonstrating aural application of improvisational techniques distinctive to Wendel's playing style.

The one idea that has changed throughout this research paper is the use and application of techniques when manipulating melodic and rhythmically based shapes. Chapter three documented the improvisational techniques commonly used by Wendel throughout the duration of a performance, but in chapter four these techniques were often used simultaneously in application.

The manipulations (techniques) commonly discovered when analysing articulation and shape-centered ideas in Wendel's improvisation were:

Articulation	Rhythm	Melody
Ghost-tonguing	Displacement	Chromatic Targeting
Staccato	Rhythmic development	Interval based sequencing
Dynamic variation		Melodic sequencing
		Chromatic passing notes
		Chord anticipation
		Melodic cell development
		Mixing melodic shapes
		Tonal Anchoring (Pivot)

To the best of this author's knowledge research into Ben Wendel's approach to articulation and shape-based improvisation is reasonably new or non-existent. It is hoped that the techniques exhibited in this research paper will shed light on an area that improvising musicians may not have considered to such a comprehensive extent. It will be interesting to see shape-based improvisation progress as musicians decide to investigate these techniques further.

Appendix A: "What Was"

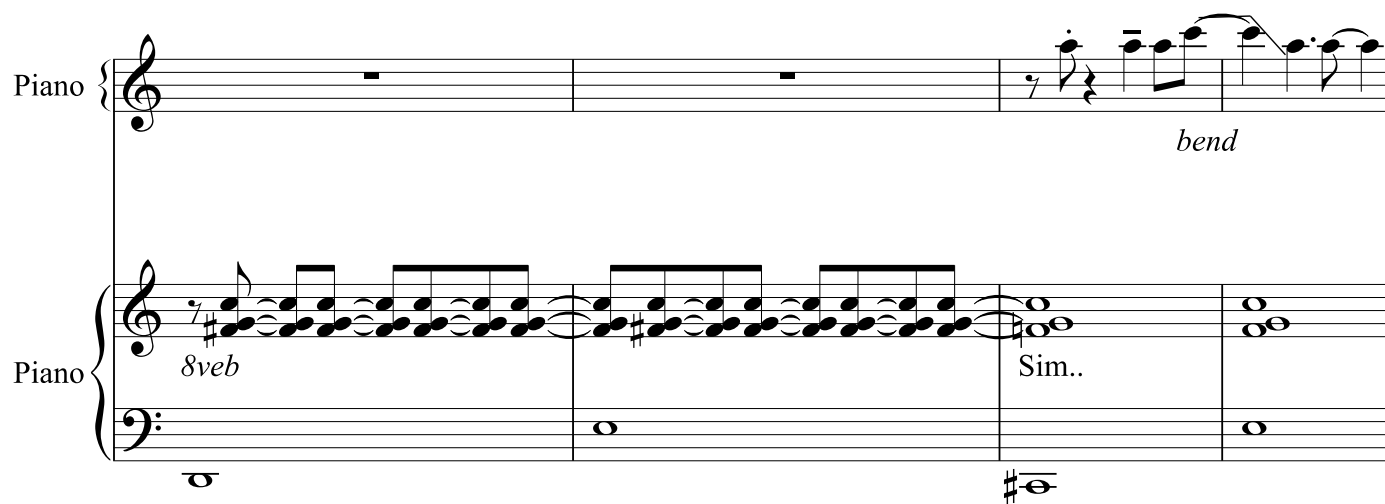
Piano

Piano

8veb

Sim..

bend



5

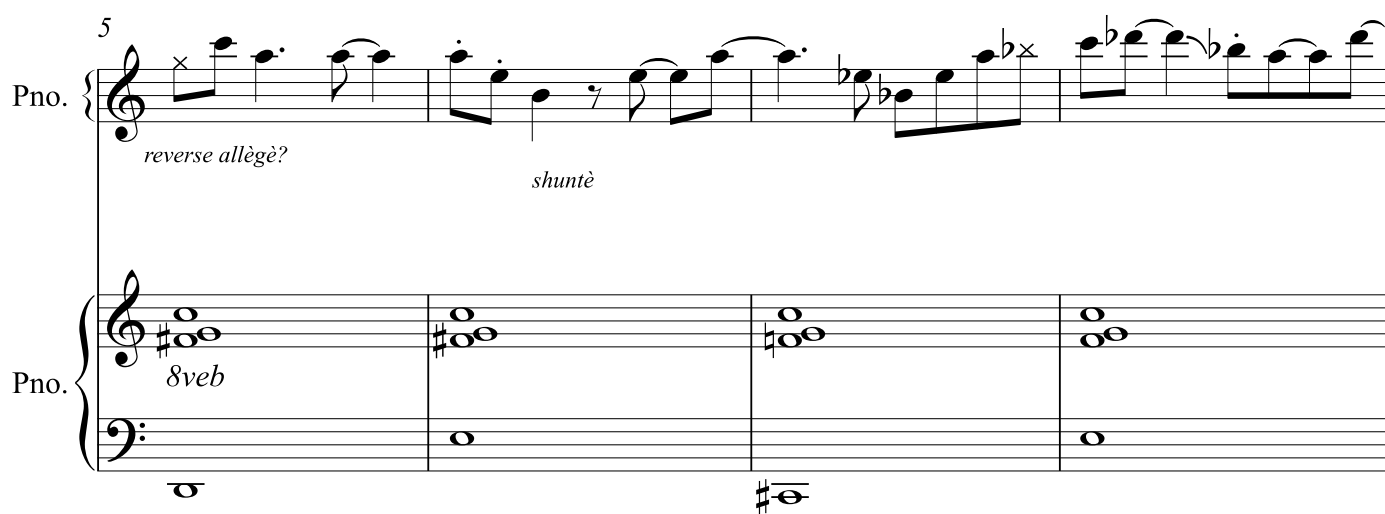
Pno.

reverse allègè?

shuntè

Pno.

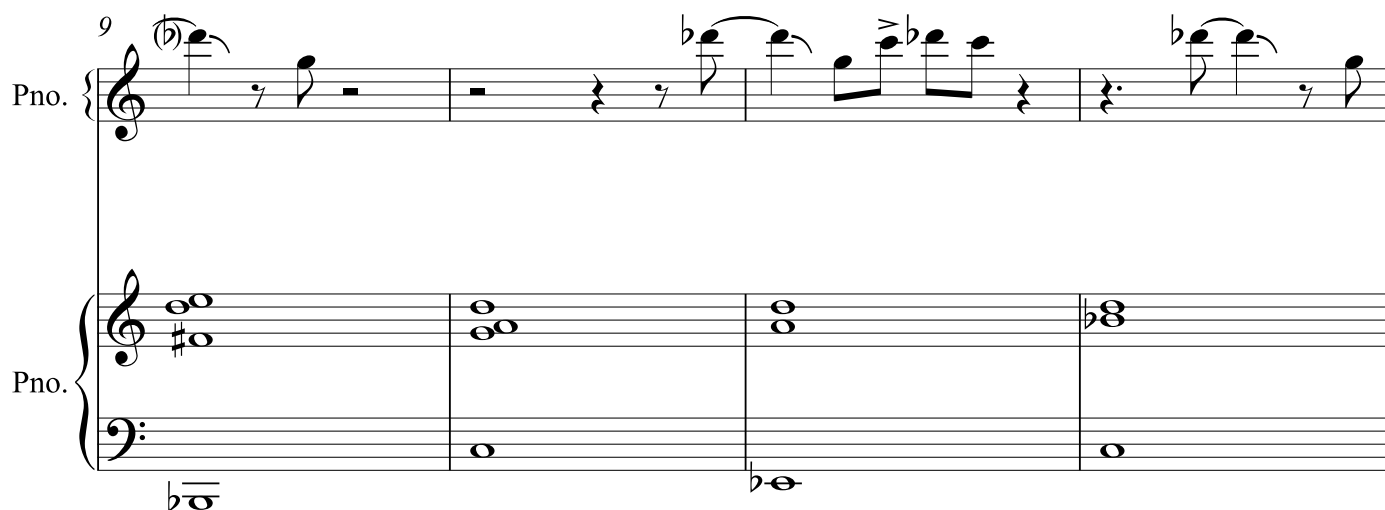
8veb



9

Pno.

Pno.



2

13 *tr*

Pno.

Pno.

17

Pno.

Pno.

21 *reverse allègè?*

Pno.

Pno.

25 *allègè*

Pno.

Pno.

29

Pno.

3 Bend?

33

Pno.

8va

3

3

3

3

37

Pno.

ultra short?

41

Pno.

45

Pno.

47

Pno.

8veb

51

Pno.

Vowel?

8veb

55

Pno.

Hemiola?

8va

extra short

59 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

63

allègè?

hemiola?

Pno.

Pno.

67

Pno.

Pno.

71

Pno.

Pno.

75 *8va*

Pno.

Pno.

79

Pno.

Pno.

83

Pno.

Articulation?

Pno.

87 *8va*

Pno.

Pno.

90

Pno.

Pno.

93

Pno.

Pno.

8veb

97

Pno.

Pno.

8veb

101

Pno.

Pno.

8veb

105

Pno.

106

107

Pno.

108

109

Pno.

110

111

112

Laying back on time

113

Pno.

114

115

Pno.

8^{va}

(8)

117

Pno.

8

119

Pno.

8

121

Pno.

8^{va}

10 (8)-----]

123

Pno.

Pno.

125

Pno.

Pno.

(8)-----]

130

Pno.

Pno.

134 8va-----]

Pno.

Pno.

136

Pno.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3

138

Pno.

3 3 3

8veb

140

Pno.

8veb

142

Pno.

8veb

144

Pno.

148

Pno.

152

Pno.

154 *8va*

Pno.

The musical score is written for piano (Pno.) and consists of five systems. Each system has a single treble clef staff and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and various accidentals. The key signature changes from one sharp (F#) to one flat (Bb) between measures 148 and 152. Measure 154 is marked with an 8va (octave up) instruction. The score ends with a fermata over the final measure.

Pno.

156

8^{va}

3

3

3

3

3

Pno.

Pno.

158

3

3

Pno.

Pno.

160

Pno.

Pno.

162

8^{va}

Pno.

14

(8)-----|

Pno.

164

8^{va}

Pno.

Measures 164-167. Measure 164 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand begins with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, and D5. Measures 165-167 continue the melodic line with various intervals and triplets. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes in both staves.

(8)-----|

Pno.

168

3

Pno.

Measures 168-170. Measure 168 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The right hand features a triplet of eighth notes. Measures 169-170 continue the melodic line with various intervals and triplets. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes in both staves.

(8)-----|

Pno.

170

3

Pno.

Measures 170-173. Measure 170 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand features a triplet of eighth notes. Measures 171-173 continue the melodic line with various intervals and triplets. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes in both staves.

174

Pno.

Pno.

Measures 174-177. Measure 174 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand features a melodic line with a slur. Measures 175-177 continue the melodic line with various intervals. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes in both staves.

178

Pno.

182

Pno.

49

Appendix B: “Blue over Gold”

The image displays a page of musical notation for a piano piece, consisting of six systems of staves. The notation is complex, featuring various chords, triplets, and time signatures. The piece is marked 'Piano' and 'Pno.'.

System 1: The first system shows a piano introduction. The right hand (RH) starts with a series of chords marked $E^{13}(\text{sus4})$, followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand (LH) has a simple bass line. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Chords $F\#m7$ and $A/G\#$ are indicated.

System 2: The second system continues the piano introduction. The RH features a triplet of eighth notes and a series of chords. The LH has a simple bass line. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Chords $F\#m7$ and $A/G\#$ are indicated.

System 3: The third system shows a piano introduction. The RH features a triplet of eighth notes and a series of chords. The LH has a simple bass line. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Chords $Gmaj7$, $A7(\text{sus4})$, and $Bm(b13)$ are indicated.

System 4: The fourth system shows a piano introduction. The RH features a triplet of eighth notes and a series of chords. The LH has a simple bass line. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Chords $Cmaj7(\#11)$ and $Bb13(\#5)$ are indicated.

System 5: The fifth system shows a piano introduction. The RH features a triplet of eighth notes and a series of chords. The LH has a simple bass line. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Chords $A_b\text{maj7}$ and $F\#m7$ are indicated.

System 6: The sixth system shows a piano introduction. The RH features a triplet of eighth notes and a series of chords. The LH has a simple bass line. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Chords $E^{13}(\text{sus4})$, $F\#m7$, and $A/G\#$ are indicated.

21 $E^{13}(sus4)$ 8^{va}

Pno.

23 $F\#m7$ $A/G\#$

Pno.

25 $Gmaj7$

Pno.

27 $A^7(sus4)$ $Bm(b13)$ 8^{va}

Pno.

29 $Cmaj7(\#11)$ $Bb^{13}(\#5)$

Pno.

31 $A\flat omaj7$

Pno.

33 E¹³(sus4)

Pno.

35

Pno.

F#m⁷ A/G#

37 E¹³(sus4) E¹³(sus4)

Pno.

39 F#m⁷ A/G#

Pno.

41 Gmaj⁷

Pno.

43 A⁷(sus4) Bm(b¹³) 8va-----

Pno.

4

45 Cmaj7(#11) Bb13(b9)

Pno.

47 Abmaj7

Pno.

49 E13(sus4) F#m7 A/G#

Pno.

53 E13(sus4) F#m7 A/G#

Pno.

56 8va Gmaj7

Pno.

59 A7(sus4) Bm(b13)

Pno.

61 Cmaj7(#11) Bb13(b9) Abomaj7 5

Pno.

65

Pno.

Appendix C: "Jean and Renata"

Piano

Piano

5

Pno.

Pno.

9

Pno.

Pno.

13

Pno.

Pno.

15

Pno.

17

Pno.

19

Pno.

21

Pno.

23

Pno.

The image shows a musical score for piano, measures 15 through 23. The score is written for a single instrument, labeled 'Pno.' (Piano). The notation is in standard musical notation, featuring a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a single melodic line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Measure 15 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, and then a quarter note Bb4. The bass line consists of a half note G3. Measure 16 continues the melody with a quarter note C5, followed by an eighth note D5, and then a quarter note E5. The bass line consists of a half note F3. Measure 17 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, and then a quarter note Bb4. The bass line consists of a half note G3. Measure 18 continues the melody with a quarter note C5, followed by an eighth note D5, and then a quarter note E5. The bass line consists of a half note F3. Measure 19 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, and then a quarter note Bb4. The bass line consists of a half note G3. Measure 20 continues the melody with a quarter note C5, followed by an eighth note D5, and then a quarter note E5. The bass line consists of a half note F3. Measure 21 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, and then a quarter note Bb4. The bass line consists of a half note G3. Measure 22 continues the melody with a quarter note C5, followed by an eighth note D5, and then a quarter note E5. The bass line consists of a half note F3. Measure 23 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, and then a quarter note Bb4. The bass line consists of a half note G3.

35

Pno.

Pno.

37

Pno.

Pno.

39

Pno.

8va

Pno.

41 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score consists of six systems, each with a single-staff right-hand part and a grand-staff left-hand part. The right-hand parts are marked with measure numbers 35, 37, 39, and 41. The left-hand parts are marked with 'Pno.' and measure numbers 35, 37, 39, and 41. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The right-hand melody is highly technical, featuring many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The left-hand accompaniment is more rhythmic, often using eighth and sixteenth notes. Measure 39 includes an 8va marking for the right hand. Measure 41 is marked with an 8-measure repeat sign.

43

Pno.

Pno.

45

Pno.

Pno.

47

Pno.

Pno.

49

Pno.

Pno.

51 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

53

Pno.

Pno.

56

Pno.

Pno.

58

Pno.

Pno.

60

Pno.

Pno.

62

Pno.

Pno.

64

Pno.

8va-----

Pno.

66 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

68

Pno.

Pno.

70

Pno.

Pno.

72

Pno.

Pno.

74 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

76 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

78

Pno.

Pno.

79

Pno.

Pno.

81

Pno.

Pno.

83 *8va*

Pno.

Pno.

85 (8)

Pno.

Pno.

87

Pno.

Pno.

89

Pno.

Pno.

91 *8va* *2 2*

Pno.

93

Pno.

95

Pno.

97

Pno.

99

Pno.

101

Pno.

103

Pno.

105

Pno.

Appendix D:

Hey Luke its Ben, I'm on a flight at the moment heading to Germany and finally answering your data collection. Um, people are sleeping around me so I'm going to speak kind of quietly. And I'm probably gonna sneeze and pause a lot to think about your questions so, ok lets get started.

Sound, have I given special attention to articulation and tone manipulation?

Yeah, I think the thing about my approach to the saxophone that fellow saxophonists often talk to me about is they hear a lot of, they often point out that there's a lot of like classical training that they recognise in my technique and that's usually an accurate assessment, I started of as a classical saxophonist and bassoonist as you may or may not know. And that kind of aesthetic and approach of every note having clear and full articulation and that's just kinda stuck with me ever since. So I give a lot of attention to those aspects of sound. I remember when I was younger; initially the thing I was really obsessed with was having a big sound. So I did all kinds of exercises to literally just expand the dynamic range of my sound. And then as I've gotten older I have sort of become less obsessed with that and more obsessed with the actual tone and timbre of the sound. You mentioned breath as an example of this, you know basically until recently, I mean its kind of an ongoing process that never ends, but I've been obsessed with, I've sort of had a sound in my head that I've wanted, and I'm sort of always trying to find ways to get closer to that sound, though I still don't feel like I'm not there yet. Which is that I want a sound that has a lot of volume and core to it, but not a lot of mid and high bright timbres, I don't like brightness in sound. On earlier recordings the way that I would try and compensate for that was that I would very often use two microphones and blend them, nearly always use a ribbon microphone. Like on Simple Song I used a Royer 121 and a Noyman new 87. And the Royer is a ribbon microphone and what it does is it kinda adds all kinds of warmth and kind of puts this sort of, I don't know how to explain it. It gives this sort of creaminess to the mid and high range of the sax. So all that sound that I dislike, the real reed-i-ness of the sax kinda gets warmed up a little

bit. So that was kind of a concerted effort, in terms of the actual recording. Talk about track two, I think again what I'm going after is a sort of this very pure even sound from the bottom to the top of the saxophone, especially like getting into the altissimo, I really do like that more classical aesthetic approach, so that the altissimo is very clear, its in tune, it has a certain kind of pure glass like quality to it. So the challenge has been to find a mouthpiece and a saxophone that gives me the ability to have all that dexterity, leaping from the bottom to the top of the horn, whilst still also giving me those other elements that I want which is warmth of sound but not, not, without it being fuzzy. I don't want an old school sound; I want just this pure warm tone that has a lot of clarity to it in the lows-mids and highs, so it's a total dance for me finding that. Basically at this point, I'm closer than I have ever been and that's from a combination of figuring out the right kind of horn; I play a super balanced action now and those tend to have, those horns if you get a good one, the neck and the bore tend to be larger so they have this potential to have this really big brassy sound and then I play an Otto Link Reso Chamber. And I think it's about a seven opening and I have just a little bit of; I had the mouthpiece worked on, its just a little bit of baffle open but mostly it's a smooth slope going in. So mostly it's just, there's no resistance on the reed and tone. And that's gotten me as close as I've gotten so far to the sounds. And then when I record I use a modern stereo ribbon mic, called an AA-R88, so the combination of all those things is how I approach tone. Mentors would be people like, I'll just roll it all into one. Living mentors would be people like Joe Lovano Chris Cheek, Chris Potter, Mark Turner, Wayne Shorter, Yan Gabarek, Michael Brecker, Bob Minter Those People have affected me a lot. Exercises would be to this day would be a pretty religious and consistent dedication to harmonics, Overtones, Long Tones, I still to this day, I still do that nearly everyday for at least 15-30 minutes. Ok that answers sound, Harmony and Melody. **(Answering main body)** (Reads question) I'm not so sure, I think I half agree with that statement which is I'm mostly obsessed with the idea of melodic shapes and how to manipulate and move them around with any given piece. Bebop language that soft just an on going process, I grew up on that language, I did a whole bunch of transcriptions but generally speaking with a lot of the groups I play in that specific language doesn't necessarily sound organic or fit, so

you know perhaps its sort of embedded in my training and how I create lines, but I'm not necessarily thinking about lines specifically bebop at this point. Track 03, this is tricky I don't know what you mean by track three, Maybe your referring to frame? Lets take a look here. Or maybe your talking about another track I'm not sure, well I just answer this question broadly without knowing which track your referring to. (Reads question) this is a tricky one to answer. I guess for me the general approach has bin; for me the general approach has bin that I intellectually investigate and practice all forms of linear approach, so what that means is that even if I never actually play that way I'll still practice playing through standards on my own without any accompaniment and really try and play in ways that really clearly outline the harmonic content, whether that be quote, unquote "bebop language" or just any language. So I'm constantly practicing that, but the approach when I'm playing live is, maybe has a little bit more emphasis for me on just trusting that all of that intellectual practicing of actual concrete bebop and linear language, I'm not really thinking about that when I play. I really like the idea of not thinking, or trying to think as little as possible and mostly just following ear and instincts. So the approach is in a sense is non analytical though there is a great deal of intellectual thought that's happening when I'm not playing live, there's a great deal of intellectual practicing that's happening, but when I'm actually playing live and improvising with people, the main emphasis would be really ear training based. I, being able to play what I hear on the horn versus what I know on the horn, and then significant harmonic devices in your improvisation. The significant thing would be that I've just practiced this idea of being able to create shapes that I hear and then be able to move them in rhythmic and harmonic ways as easily as possible and then just doing that without thinking of any specific kind of liner of conceptual approach. So when you ask about what harmonic influences/concepts have you practiced previously the answer is that I have and continue to practice absolutely Coltrane type matrixes, involic ideas, everyday I have a book that has phrases and shapes that I'm constantly collecting from everywhere, from my own practice from lis8tening to peers, from listening to recordings, from listening to live gigs, and I'm cycling them through all the keys all through the horn and permeating them in different ways that I see fit. So

that's stuff that I have practiced and continue to practice but I'm not really consciously thinking about when I'm performing. (reads question) Ok well I'm gonna try and find a track that gives you a view into that, although its not easy to find one where its laid out very clearly and obviously. But essentially the first time I started thinking about this idea was back in college, one of my class mates was an incredible piano player called Matt Mitchell who now is becoming well known playing with the Claudio quintet, dave douglas, all kinds of folks, Tim Berne, and he was really one of the most advanced players I knew at the time and I remember asking him you know how do you approach changes, and I remember him saying; cuase this guy was capable of anything, he could do the most complicated intellectual approaches on a turn of a dime if he wanted to, but he just said to me "well you know I basically, I just inside of the key and outside of the key as I see fit and I just play shapes that are really strong and have a clear design to them and I just know how the forms work and that's just how I do it, I'm not really thinking about any kind of specific math or anything like that". So what I took away from that is this idea of being able to take melodic ideas or narratives of a solo and really stick to them and move them around you know from bar to bar, or 8-bar phrases or 16 bars or over a whole a form, and how if you stick to the idea in a really strong and clear way you can harmonically really depart from the changes but as a listening experience you'll still accept the narrative of what the soloist is doing if the design and structure of the information is really clear and has a lot of intelligence to it. So essentially that sort of, like that's me nut-shelling the micro-macro thing, and a lot of it is reaction based and it really just depends on who your playing with and how reactive they are and how willing they are to stretch and suddenly create completely new beds of harmonic information over what we would call standard changes or non-standard changes, you know an example would be 26-2. You've got all these changes going through it, but essentially if you were to do the macro view of the piece its in the key of F, that's like the huge step way back of the piece, its in the key of F. So depending on who your playing with, can literally be moving bar to bar through these changes or you can just keep stepping further and further back and doing pedal points that more and more express the resolution key of F. Ok (reads last questions) There's not really any, I guess the

limitations I give myself would be just trying my best not to write things that have already, that sound to me cliché or like they've already been done. And that's an incredibly subjective type of thing; it's a moving target. But essentially as I'm writing if I hear things that seem, idiomatic of something that I've heard before in a different era of music in a way that just sound kind of passé or whatever then that's sort of like an internal red flag that tells me to shut it down, and I try to push whatever that is into a place where it doesn't sound like anything ever before. But what I found for myself is that composing has actually been a major driver in how I create language for myself, it's a way to sit down and very slowly create lines and harmonic ideas in slow motion essentially. And through writing and pushing myself to write things that I've never heard before, I'm also at the same time pushing myself to create linear information that I can use in solos, so a lot of this stuff that I've written eventually in terms of in heads or how I've written songs has actually found its way in to how I improvise in general and in any setting. (Reads question) I'd say the main things would be basically all of the Kneebody music is, not basically, well all of it is non-swing oriented. The feel for all of the music is hyper accurate, hyper subdivided and tends to be hyper straight, so one thing where it's really affected my playing is getting to this idea of being very accurate and even in terms of how I play rhythmic ideas and 8th note ideas or whatever. And then it's a loud band so not only am I dealing with playing in that way where I'm trying to get incredibly accurate in what I express don't to the 32nd and the 64th note, but I'm also having to do it in a very loud way. Cause it's an electro acoustic band. And the other way it's affected my playing is more obvious ways, like the use of effects pedals over the years and how that's leaked into a lot of other projects that I do, like Tigran Hamasyan and other groups. You ask has the cueing system influenced the way you construct solos? And have you thought about implementing (if you haven't already) the cueing system into your own music outside Kneebody? The Cueing system, the way it's affected me more than anything else is that essentially at this point we've been doing it for so long that even in the middle of a solo, if I'm taking a solo and creating a narrative, sometimes the band members will actually be cueing and changing the music behind me. So playing in Kneebody is this constant practice of listening across the band, I'm following my own narrative

but not at any given second am I ever shutting my ears down to the rest of the band. So it's actually really helped me in terms of splitting my ear in two, like listening inwards and outwards at the same time. And that's really helped me in other groups, because for me I feel like its just expanded how I hear, but I just pick up on a lot more in general and I don't shut down and put the blinders on and just kind of hear myself when I'm playing. I have used the cueing system in different groups, just a very little bit. I brought it into Tigrans Hamasyans Band and I use it in my own band, the only one I use is the cue we call the freeze cue, which you may have witnessed, which is just like it freezes a section or tells you to un-freeze a section and move on, so I've taught that to rhythm sections that I've played with and we've used it in certain songs. Like for example simple song that final section of the form, that part that goes (sings) often that will be an arrival point in the solo form that feels really nice and I will want it to go longer and I'll use the freeze cue. Has the use of electronics altered your approach to improvisation and sound, has it brought your attention to finer details that you may not have thought about before? Yeah, how its altered how I improvise I, when you have options like delay for example, suddenly you can play with a lot more space and let notes linger and you can stack things in a different way and theres this information continues to fill up the space even when your not playing, and or when I play with distortion it has a different attack and feeling to it and so I can lay in to lines with a different kind of attitude. So yeah definitely the effects have drawn my attention to kind of improvising in different ways, because suddenly you're playing with this non-acoustic sound and that just kind of inspires you to go in different directions.

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